

**Statement of Charles Barclay
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On Behalf Of
The American Association of Airport Executives
And
Airports Council International-North America
Before the House Homeland Security Subcommittee on
Economic Security, Infrastructure Protection, and Cybersecurity
The Future of TSA's Registered Traveler Program
November 3, 2005**

Thank you for the opportunity to share with the subcommittee the views of the airport community on the future of the Registered Traveler Program. I am testifying today on behalf of the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE), Airports Council International – North America (ACI-NA), and our Airport Legislative Alliance, a joint legislative advocacy organization. AAAE represents the men and women who manage primary, commercial service, reliever, and general aviation airports. ACI-NA represents local, regional and state governing bodies that own and operate commercial airports in the United States and Canada.

I want to begin by expressing our appreciation to you, Chairman Lungren, and to the subcommittee for the considerable attention you have devoted this year to highlighting the need for the federal government to expedite the deployment of new technology, including the Registered Traveler Program, in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of security screening operations at airports across the country. With aviation traffic returning to record levels and with federal resources become ever more scarce, it is imperative to get the most out of the resources we devote to security. Utilizing better technology to effectively manage risk results in better security and a more efficient use of federal and industry investments.

Unfortunately, the federal government to this point has been slow to embrace the promise of technology as the subcommittee has heard during the course of several hearings this year. The in-line installation of explosive detection equipment in airports, for example, will save the federal government billions of dollars at the handful of airports where TSA has committed resources to having those systems in place. Despite significant security benefits and dramatic personnel savings – savings that could be applied to other homeland security needs – no plans yet exist for federal investment in these systems at additional airports.

The Registered Traveler Program has likewise been slow in gaining firm direction from TSA. We are, however, very encouraged by the leadership that DHS Assistant Secretary Kip Hawley has shown in this area and believe that we are finally moving in the right direction with this critical program.

Rather than waiting for government to act entirely on its own, it is clear that airports and the aviation industry can and should play an active role in partnering with the federal government to design and implement meaningful solutions to security challenges. The establishment of effective public/private partnerships has already proven extremely successful, for example, in building a system for processing fingerprint-based background checks and additional background screening for more than 1.8 million airport and airline employees through the Transportation Security Clearinghouse.

On the Registered Traveler front as I will discuss in more detail, the airport community and its aviation partners are moving forward to help provide a model for Registered Traveler programs that will be interoperable, innovative, and will endure past the span of a “pilot program.” Undoubtedly, the best path forward is one in which federal resources and standards are combined with the knowledge, expertise and creativity of airports, airlines, and aviation-oriented businesses.

Registered Traveler Program Will Improve Security and Efficiency at Airports

The value of a nationwide Registered Traveler Program is already well-established. The concept has received the strong endorsement of the 9/11 Commission and numerous others as the subcommittee discovered through the various hearings you have held on the topic this year. In an era of risk management, limited federal resources must be focused on known and unknown risks to the aviation system. Registered Traveler accomplishes that goal by helping TSA to better align screeners and resources with potential risks.

In simple terms, Registered Traveler shifts the focus from finding dangerous “things” to finding dangerous “people.” The most important weapon that the 19 terrorists had on September 11 wasn’t box cutters; it was knowledge – knowledge of our aviation system and existing security protocols, which they used to their advantage.

With more than 700 million passengers traveling through the U.S. aviation system each year – a number that is expected to grow to more than one billion annually within the next decade – we simply cannot afford to treat each passenger the same. Today’s personnel-dependent screening system is already being pushed to the brink, a fact that is evidenced by increased wait times at a growing number of passenger and baggage screening checkpoints. One can only imagine how bad the situation will become as 300 million or more additional passengers are added to the system – especially if they are processed as they are today.

While a nationwide Registered Traveler Program will be open to all whom are eligible, there is no doubt that the frequent fliers – the six million passengers who make up the overwhelming majority of all travel – will be the ones most likely to enroll. By providing a different screening protocol for this group of registered and scrutinized travelers – which we believe is a critical component of the program moving forward – TSA will be able to better target security resources, expedite processing for all passengers, and reduce the passenger “hassle factor.”

As you know, TSA has just concluded a Registered Traveler pilot program that involved five airports partnering with a single air carrier at each airport. A sixth pilot program which involves a public-private partnership is on-going at Orlando International Airport. Although the original TSA Registered Traveler pilot programs were popular with participants, they were not interoperable by design, which severely limited benefits to only one air carrier at each of the five original airports. Additionally, participants were subjected to the exact same security protocol – the removal of laptops, shoes, and coats were still required, for example – as non-participants, meaning that the only real benefit was simply being moved to a shorter screening line.

Now that the technology has been tested, we should turn to a process that realizes the true potential of Registered Traveler, one that is ***nationwide and interoperable***. Participants who sign up in Dallas, in other words, must be recognized and accepted as they travel to San Francisco, Los Angeles or other airports throughout the aviation system. Additionally, security screening protocols should be adjusted for program participants in recognition of the extensive background vetting they have received.

Airport Registered Traveler Interoperability Consortium (RTIC)

Airports, in light of their public nature and responsibilities to the communities they serve, remain eager to partner with the TSA to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the security screening process. In recognition of the promise that Registered Traveler holds in achieving these goals, airport professionals have been working diligently to move forward operationally with the program. One voluntary initiative in particular that I would like to report to the subcommittee today is the creation of the Registered Traveler Interoperability Consortium (RTIC). The RTIC is a group of nearly 60 airports that are working to define and establish the mutual and common business practices and technical standards that will complement federal standards and help push forward a national program. This represents a significant

attempt by a large group in the airport community to partner with TSA in making the promise of RT a reality as quickly as possible.

The goal of the RTIC is to develop a common set of business processes and technical rules on an open, secure and industry-driven network among airports that will create a fair and seamless platform for airports, airlines and vendors to interface with DHS and among each other. Rather than pre-ordaining any one proprietary system, this open-architecture approach ensures that airports have an opportunity to work with any number of technologies or vendors to design a system that works best at their facility. This approach also ensures that the creativity and competition of the private sector is unleashed to better serve local needs and to keep program costs in check.

Current members of the RTIC include:

Albany International Airport	Northwestern Regional Airport Commission
Atlantic City International Airport	Palm Beach International Airport
Bangor International Airport	Palm Springs International Airport
Boston Logan International Airport	Peninsula Airport Commission
Chattanooga Metropolitan Airport Authority	Philadelphia International Airport
Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport	Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport
Denver International Airport	Pittsburgh-Allegheny County Airport Authority
Dickinson Theodore Roosevelt Regional Airport	Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
Flagstaff Pulliam Airport	Port Columbus International Airport
Fort Wayne International Airport	Pullman-Moscow Regional Airport
Ft. Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport	Redding Municipal Airport
Grand Forks Regional Airport Authority	Redmond Airport
Greater Orlando Aviation Authority	Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority
Greater Rockford Airport Authority	Rhode Island Airport Corporation
Huntsville International Airport	Roanoke Regional Airport Commission
Jackson Hole Airport	San Francisco International Airport
Kent County Department of Aeronautics	Santa Barbara Airport
Lafayette Regional Airport	Seattle-Tacoma International Airport
Lexington Blue Grass Airport	St. Louis-Lambert International Airport
Lihue Airport	Shenandoah Valley Regional Airport
Las Vegas McCarran International Airport	Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority
Memphis-Shelby County Airport Authority	(Reagan National and Dulles Airports)
Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority	Tucson Airport Authority
Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority	Tupelo Regional Airport
Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Airport	Waco Regional Airport
Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport	Wayne County Airport Authority
Monterey Peninsula Airport	Wichita Airport Authority
Myrtle Beach International Airport	Wilmington International Airport
Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport	Yeager Airport

The airports of the RTIC have established and agreed on common core principles that will enable technical interoperability across a broad and varied airport network. More importantly, these principles will establish processes and procedures that will provide a consistent, common and secure framework from which Registered Traveler can work for all travelers at airports choosing to participate in the RTIC. Specifically, the RTIC has agreed to create a system where:

- Qualified applicants in the RT Program will agree to voluntarily provide TSA- specified personal data, both biographic and biometric, which will be used by TSA to assess the security threat of each participant.

- Service providers will be responsible for enrollment operations, including collection and verification of personal data of eligible applicants. Service providers must protect and maintain all personal data related to an applicant in a secure manner and prevent the unauthorized disclosure of the personal data.
- Service providers must securely transmit valid application enrollment data to the RTIC Registered Traveler Management System (RTMS). The RTIC RTMS will receive enrollment data from the RT service providers and will validate and perform duplicate checking of received enrollment data and forward data to the TSA for security threat assessments.
- The TSA will conduct the security threat assessments and return results daily per a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between TSA and RTIC.
- On receipt of notification of an acceptable security threat assessment for an applicant, the RTIC will notify the RT service provider for that applicant of the updated status of the applicant and will forward the applicant's credential information to the service provider.
- Service providers will issue and deliver participants' membership cards (e.g. smart cards). Service providers must notify RTIC of any future changes in the status of their participants, such as lost or stolen cards. Service providers are also responsible for customer service, including communicating with applicants regarding their approval status and responding to applicant and participant inquiries.
- Service providers may not unnecessarily disclose biographic and/or biometric data required for the purpose of the RT Program and collected by the service provider from RT Program applicants or participants. Service providers may not sell or disseminate any biographic and/or biometric data required for the RT Program and collected by the service provider from RT Program applicants or participants for any commercial purposes without the approval of the airport.
- Participating traveler processing will occur at the airport's security checkpoints. The placement of the RT screening stations will be located in front of the TSA passenger screening areas. Passengers that are not enrolled in the RT Program or are not approved when presented at the RT processing area will use the normal TSA security lines/lanes. Passengers that are enrolled and approved will use the designated RT security screening lines/lanes.
- Biometric technology will be used for traveler identity verification at the RT screening stations. Once a participant presents their membership card, fingerprint and iris biometric features will be used to verify passenger identity. Proposed biometric systems shall be currently operational, highly accurate, cost effective, and capable of confirming the identities of large populations within short time constraints.
- Service providers will operate the RT screening stations, including the timely update of system and card revocation status to ensure fast, secure and reliable verification and status-checking at the airport checkpoint.
- Service providers are responsible for installing, furnishing, integrating, operating and maintaining all of their required equipment and systems.
- The RTIC will create and maintain the technical and business rules for the RT Program. The RTIC will operate a certification program for RT service providers to validate the conformance of their systems, service levels, and processes with the RT Program rules. Service providers will be required to undergo an annual re-certification and auditing of their systems and processes.

- Service providers will market the RT program to potential applicants and will use standardized RT Program logos and signage within their marketing.

Other airports may choose other approaches. However, by establishing a sustainable and cost-driven approach in partnership with TSA, airports can help ensure a Registered Traveler Program that focuses on enhanced security above all else in addition to expediting the travel experience. These two pillars are the primary values that the nation's frequent air travelers want and that each of you as policymakers rightly will demand. By bringing efficiency back into the nation's airport screening checkpoints, TSA screeners will be able to better focus their limited resources on the critical task of providing more rigorous screening to individuals about whom we know less than those who have voluntarily submitted their background for extensive vetting and clearance.

As each member of this subcommittee knows as a frequent traveler, every airport is unique. A successful, long-term Registered Traveler Program depends on the implementation of a technical, operational and business model capable of supporting individual airport needs, while providing the common infrastructure that allows passengers to use this capability at any airport nationwide. In recognition of that fact, it is critical that a permanent Registered Traveler Program be airport-driven and run outside of government with careful and consistent government standards and oversight.

Mr. Chairman, more than four years after the tragic events of September 11, we still have a great deal of work to accomplish in transforming the existing personnel-dependent screening system into the system of the future. In an era dramatically increasing demands on our nation's air transportation system, it is critical that we move forward as quickly as possible with promising technology like the Registered Traveler Program. Airports and the aviation industry have a key role to play in working with the federal government to make RT operational, and we are pleased to report great progress in that regard. It is our sincere hope and expectation that the federal government will fulfill its responsibilities so that the program can become a reality in the very near future.

Again, we appreciate the leadership of this subcommittee and the opportunity to testify today.